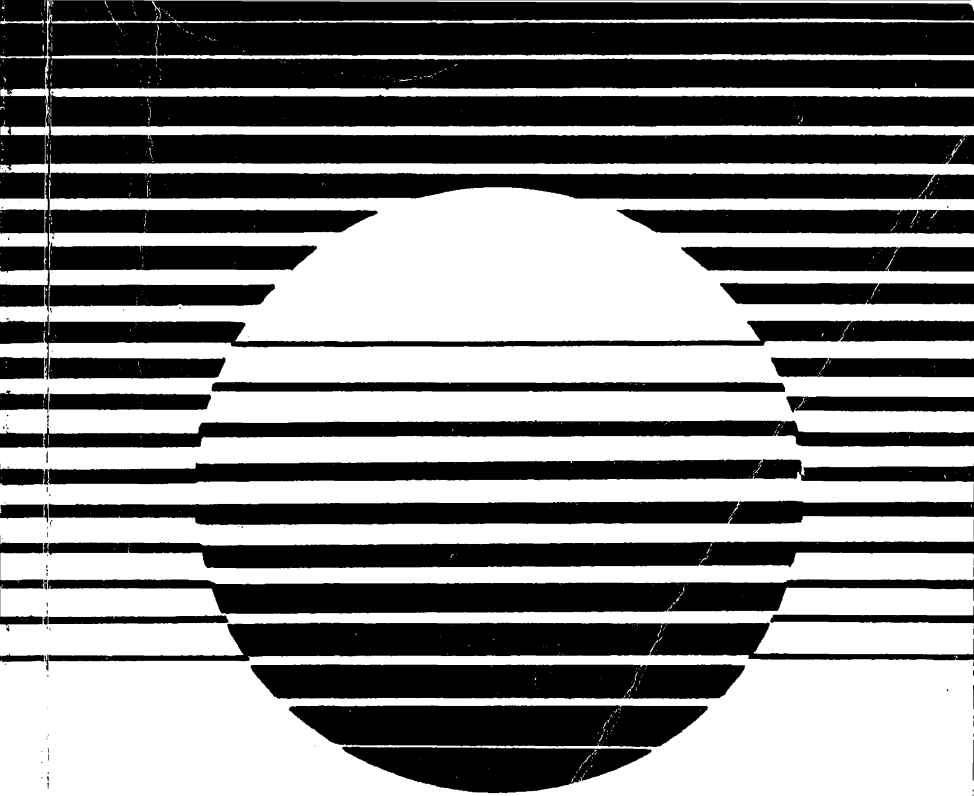

THE BUDDHA – DHAMMA

by

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Namotassa Bhagavato

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CHAPTER I.

BEFORE THE BUDDHA.

The philosophical and ethical states of India, before the Buddha came, were undergoing a hopeless confusion.

1. The superstition of the Brahmanas.

1. People, led by the Brahmins, performed various sorts of sacrifices, 'yajna' as they called them; in which goats, cows, horses and other animals were killed in very great numbers and offered to different Vedic gods and goddesses. There were sacrifices, in which even men were killed and fed to the sacred fire.

2. Those who performed these sacrifices were led to believe by the cunning priests that different deities and spirits were being pleased and made favourable by the offerings. Then, being thus pleased, they would bestow upon the performers, much prosperity in this world and would take them to heaven after death.

3. At first, the ignorant masses believed in these superstitious and absurd performances, and practised them largely, from the poorest to the kings. These sacrifices had become very common in India, and ample of blood was daily shed in the name of religion.

4. But, men gradually began to doubt the validity of the sacrifices, for, they saw, these practices did not make any

difference in the advancement of the people. There came out champions, who actually overthrew all the authorities of the Brahmanas, and tried to build up their philosophy and ethics on independent lines.

2. Materialism, Led By the Carvakas.

1. Of these champions, firstly, there were the Carvakas, who did not believe in an afterlife, heaven, or hell, or re-birth. They were **absolute materialists** for whom, man is born once and dies once, as any other thing that we see in this world.

2. The jar is produced by the potter at a certain time; it then lives a certain life, and at the end is broken and is lost altogether. The self same jar never comes into existence again. Just in the same way, a man is born at a certain point of time, lives for a certain span of life, and then dies and is lost for ever. The same man will never come into existence. Our high merits or evil deeds end with our death; for after that we cease altogether to exist.

3. This view of life naturally led to the hedonistic ideals, i.e. of **'eating, drinking and being merry.'** When there is no after life, why should one give out charities, or do any meritorious work at the cost of one's own pleasure? There is therefore, no morality at all. To enjoy the greatest amount of pleasure is the wisest way.

4. These pleasure-seeking philosophers exercised much influence on their blind followers and many circles of them were found, openly indulging in all sorts of vices. They brought the social morality so low that human life and safety itself was being threatened. **This was one extreme.**

3. Asceticism.

1. Secondly, on the other extreme, there were the ascetic philosophers, or the Tjtthias. They realised the

dangers of 'Pleasure-seeking' being a standard of our conduct, and tried to give out a better ideal of ethics.

2. Contrary to the Carvakas, who did not believe in an after-life, **they believed in a permanent and blissful soul,** which is born and re-born in different bodies, and that the soul transmigrates from the body of a man to that of an animal of other species. **The 'true-self' consists in this 'soul' of man.** The physical body and sense organs are foreign to us, which are non-soul. The soul is born and re-born, and is thus miserable, because it is in the bondage of the physical body and sense organs. The senses lead us to different temptations of the world, and cause us to commit so many sins, and thus we become sinful and so miserable.

3. A true Bliss, according to them, lies in fully annihilating the physical senses, which are foreign to the soul, which itself is Bliss by nature. They devised therefore, various means to make their own senses dull and inactive.

4. They fasted for days together, or lived on grass and husk; so that, they might not get heat in their blood, which gives rise to passions. If we move in society and talk to others, we are liable to speak lies. They therefore, kept dumb—quiet for years together and even for the whole of their lives. They used very rough clothings and pricked thorns in their own bodies to conquer the temptation of touch. In this way, they practised torture on themselves by various devices, to annihilate the physical and gain the real Blissful nature of the soul. **This was the other extreme of philosophers, who were also, not the less nonsense, than the Carvakas.**

These two types of philosophers were leading the wheel of society either to immoralities or to absurd practices.

CHAPTER II.

PRINCE SIDDHARTHA.

Birth.

1. More than six hundred years before the birth of Christ, there reigned King Suddhodana over the Kingdom of the Sakyas, on the borders of Nepal. His queen Mahamaya Devi was an extremely pious and virtuous lady.

2. Once, the Queen, with her retinue, had gone to the pleasure grove, known as the Lumbini garden. In that very garden, under a Sal-tree, she delivered a very handsome and bright child.

3. Queen Mahamaya then returned to Kapilavatthu, her capital, and there were great rejoicings at the news of the birth of an heir to the king.

Prediction of the great sage Asita.

4. When Asita the great sage, heard of His birth, he at once hurried to the royal palace and desired the Child to be shown to him. The king himself brought the newborn Baby; and the holy man bowed down his head in deep reverence. He read the signs and the stars, and declared—the Child will be Buddha, Perfectly Enlightened, and show the world the way to Emancipation from the miseries of this world.

5. Queen Mahamaya however, passed away only a week after His birth.

6. But, the king's, a father's, heart was very naturally afflicted to hear that his son would leave the world and

become a recluse. He, therefore, kept the Prince in the highest luxuries and all royal grandeur. Beautiful palaces and gardens were prepared for his abode, where, none but young girls were allowed to go and attend upon the comforts of the Prince.

7. Able teachers were appointed to educate the Prince. With a divine genius and wonderful sharpness Prince Siddhartha perfected himself in the sciences and arts, and much outdid those who had come to teach.

8. When the Prince had approached the age of nineteen, the king married him to an accomplished princess, Yasodhara. This gave a consolation to the heart of the king; for, he thought that the Prince would not become a holy man any more, as he was attached and tied to the world by this marriage.

Siddhartha sees an old man, a sick man, and a dead man.

9. One day, the Prince wanted to go on an outing round the city, to see how the people lived there. Beautiful royal carriages, richly decorated, were at once arranged, and with Channa, the charioteer, the Prince started.

10. He had not gone very far from the city gate, when he happened to see a very old decrepit man, by the side of the road. He was almost bent double with age. His hair had become perfect white. His eyes were failing. He was reduced to a skeleton, unfirm, trembling with a staff in his hand.

11. "Who is he?" inquired the Prince in great amazement, "what has become of him?"

"He is an old man," they said, "he has become very weak. His limbs are now worn out with age, and he will soon die."

"Shall I too become an old man like him and die?" asked the Prince.

"Yes, every man who is born is sure to become old and be subjected to Death. Death makes no concession for anyone—be he a poor man or mighty monarch," they answered.

12. This was sufficient for the Prince to realise the realities of the world. **"They are fools," he said, "who run after the pleasures of the world, when they know how transitory they are. Riches, royal authorities, high palaces, beautiful and loving girls, are all a moment's show, a shadow' in which man is allured like a foolish child, which when passes away leaves him bewailing and lamenting."** Men run after pleasure blindly, but in the end fall in deep pits, where they receive all sorts of torments. "Everything," he said, "is 'aniccam' or transitory and 'dukkham' or misery".

13. The king got much alarmed when he heard of it; he ordered all precautions to be taken in future so that the Prince might not see any such sights, which would stir his thoughts with disgust. In spite of all cares and precautions taken by the royal servants, the Prince again, on similar trips, came across the sight of, once a sick man and once a dead man; and realised the universality of sorrow more strongly than ever.

14. King Suddhodana was very sorry that the Prince saw all these signs that would turn him away from the world, and make him a recluse.

Siddhartha Meets The Recluse.

15. After four months, Prince Siddhartha, again expressed his intention to go out on a stroll as before.

Though the king did not like his son to go out, he reluctantly gave his approval for the fourth time, as he did not choose to stand against the wishes of his son in any way.

Precautions greater than before were taken to ensure that the Prince should not see unhappy things any more.

16. This time, the Prince met the sight of a recluse, dressed in yellow robe, a begging bowl in his hand, looking very calm and perfect. The Prince had never seen a bright and attractive figure before, such as this. He paused and asked with curiosity. "What is this man? Channa! I like very much to know him."

17. The chariot was stopped. The figure itself approached the Prince with an extraordinary dignity and firmness, and said, "Prince, I am a holy man, a recluse. Seeing the world full of miseries I have left it wandering in the search of Truth and Peace." Saying so, he retired and was out of sight.

Siddhartha got the exact hint. He felt a sort of satisfaction in him.

Dancing Girls.

18. In the evening, as usual, a party of dancing girls came to entertain the Prince. All sorts of music they played and the sweetest melodies they sang, and the loveliest dances they danced. Prince Siddhartha heard them and saw them, but could not even in the least be diverted from the thoughts that he was absorbed in that evening. He was busy with himself. He reclined on his couch and soon fell asleep.

They stopped their music, songs and dance and seated down to rest themselves. Night advanced, and they too gently laid themselves down and were asleep.

19. At the dead of night, the Prince happened to get up from his sleep. The candles were still burning. He opened his eyes and looked about.

20. And, what did he see! The entertainers, the dancing girls, laid scattered all about like so many dead bodies. Some had their eyes fully shut and some half-shut, looking repulsive. Saliva flowing from their mouths, noses blowing and snoring, their saree being neglectfully disordered, some biting their teeth, some muttering in their dreams—all gave a ghastly scene before the eyes of Siddhartha, as a cemetery ground.

The Great Renunciation.

21. Prince Siddhartha stood up and walked out. He went silently to the horse-groom Channa, woke him, and said, "Get my horse ready. I will go out." Channa at once went in the stall, saddled the swiftest horse Kanthaka, and brought it ready.

22. The Prince rode it and very silently went out of the City. All night long, he gallopped on and on. He crossed the river Anoma left all his princely jewels, sword, and garments, cut his long hair, took the yellow robe and a begging bowl, and entered deep forests in the search of Truth and Peace.

A Mysterious Mendicant in the City of Rajagaha.

23. He stayed seven days at Anupiya Mango Grove near the river Anoma. He felt very happy to see how free he was and that he had no more worldly ties any more to

hinder him in his way. Then, he went to Rajagaha, the capital of the mighty kingdom of Magadha, ruled by King Bimbisara.

24. As Siddhartha walked along the streets of Rajagaha, though clad in the poor robe of a recluse, due to his majestic features and princely appearances, people were very much attracted to see him and flocked from far and near. A commotion was created in the whole town— such a wonderful sage has appeared!

King Bimbisara's Offer.

25. King Bimbisara also heard of his visit, and became curious to know who he was and what he did intend to do. He came down himself to meet the mysterious mendicant. The King was also very much taken up by his personality.

When he heard his high lineage and noble ambition, he felt so much, that he offered him to share his Kingdom. He requested him fondly to give up his purpose and stay there with all comforts and ease. But, no temptations of the world could now deter Siddhartha from his pursuit. He answered the king very mildly in a strong negative.

Siddhartha then, tried several teachers but could not be satisfied with any.

Siddhartha Tries Asceticism.

26. Near Uruvela, he met five ascetics who advised him to practise asceticism with them. Siddhartha then, began the severest types of austerities— fasting for months together, burning his body in the hot rays of the midday sun during the summer, and spending cold and frosty winter nights, dipped in water. He grew very weak and was reduced to a skeleton. Due to lack of blood in his body, his hair all fell off and his skin shrank like that of a very old

man. One day, when he was going out, he fell down senseless. Still he could not realise what he wanted.

27. Then, it occurred to him that this asceticism was not the proper way; he must keep his body healthy if he wanted to do anything. He took food and gradually gained strength. Thereupon, the other five ascetics, who were practising austerities with him, became displeased and left him to himself.

The Great Enlightenment.

28. Being left alone, Siddhartha meditated on and on. One day, he sat down under a Bo-tree, by the River Neranjara, modern Phalgu, with the firm determination that he would not get up unless he realised the Way, an Emancipation from miseries. He sat on one posture for fully one week, absorbed in deep meditation. On the seventh day, He found out the solution; the Great Enlightenment dawned upon Him. He realised that He was a Buddha or fully Enlightened One.

29. He found out that "ignorance" is the root of all evil, with the cessation of which alone one can be emancipated from the Sansara. He traced the world of miseries upwards, in a purely scientific spirit, to twelve links, called the twelve Nidanas. This, the Buddha called by the name of "Paticca Samuppada."

CHAPTER III.

THE BUDDHA.

1. Paticca Samuppada.

1. The word "PATICCA SAMUPPADA" literally means "Dependent Origination," which may be expressed also by saying "depending on this, this originates" or "on becoming this, this becomes."

Nature Is Governed On The Lap Of Paticca Samuppada.

Illustration.

2. There being clouds in the sky, it rains. It having rained the road becomes slippery. The road becoming slippery, a man falls down. The man having fallen down, becomes injured.

3. Here, a shower of rain depends on the clouds being in the sky; the road becoming slippery depends on the shower of rain; the fall of the man depends upon the road becoming slippery; the injury of the man depends upon his fall.

4. Thus, if there had been no clouds in the sky, it would not have rained; then the road would not have become slippery; then the man would not have fallen down; then he would not have got the injury.

How The Law Works.

5. In this chain we see, one incident depends upon one previous to it, and gives rise to one after it. Everything

that we find in the world can be brought in a chain of cause and effect like this. Nothing can originate without depending on something else previous to it; and no originated thing can be conceived of, which does not give rise to something else in its turn. Thus, the process goes on. Anything can be traced upwards to where it did originate from; and everything can also be traced below, to that which is produced depending on it.

What Does A Science Do.

6. The particular sciences do nothing, but try to trace an event upwards and downwards in the phenomenon, they are concerned with. Thus, Botany tell us:—A good growth of the tree depends upon a suitable manure, and a suitable manure depends upon such and such constituents in it, and so on. Physics tells us:—The movement of the engine depends upon the power of steam, and steam depends upon water and fire.

The Flow Of Causation.

7. In this way, we can take even the pettiest thing in the world, and it can be traced up and down in the same manner; for, Nature is governed by the Law of Paticca Samuppada, or "depending on this, this originates." There is no break in the process. The series of events flow continuously, one giving rise to the other. As one ripple causes another and that also another, so **the flow of causation goes on.**

The Question Of First Cause.

8. But, here, an objection can be raised as to what is that which was the **first** cause, or as to where does the process of causation end?

Really Science has never cared to find out the first cause or the last effect. Knowledge grows in proportion to our ability and labour in its search.

9. And where our scientific knowledge fails us, we have often recourse to superstition. The primitive people saw the wonders of nature and became curious to get satisfactory explanation of them. They could not explain them scientifically, i.e. by the Law of Dependent Origination. They therefore, naturally tried to explain them by some superstitious super-human agent or agents—Gods or Goddesses. But, we evidently see that any such belief in a superstitious explanation is inimicable to advancement of knowledge. The primitive man believed that the wind blows because the Wind God goes in a procession to be married. If science accepted it and did not try to trace it according to the Law of Dependent Origination, we could not have known that the movement of the wind is due to differences of atmospheric pressure.

10. A theistic or a superstitious explanation puts an end to all further inquiry. We cannot ask, who created God, or depending on what God originates. Here there is an absolute check in the advancement of knowledge.

11. **The Law of Paticca Samuppada does not investigate into the First Cause, for, the very Conception of 'first cause' means 'a total' check in the process of knowledge.**

The Law Of Paticca Samuppada Is Not Aristotelian Law Of Causation.

12. Paticca Samuppada is not, as some people erroneously take, the Law of Causation as understood by the mediaeval logicians led by Aristotle, which considers the cause and effect as two distinctly different events, one producing the other.

13. But, when examined carefully the above seems to be untenable. According to the Patïcca Samuppada two events cannot be considered as quite distinct from one another, for, they are links of the same process, which admits of no break. **No single event in the world is ever isolated. A cause therefore by itself cannot stand as such.**

Not Causation But Dependent Origination Is A Scientific Expression.

14. Clay is the cause of a pot—the mediaeval logicians assert. Yes. The clay is certainly the cause of the pot, but it is not by itself sufficient for the production of the pot. If there were no water, no wheel, no potter, no intention in the potter to produce a pot, the pot would not have been produced. All of these are unavoidable for the production of the pot. If even one of them were absent, the pot could not have been produced. What right have we to say therefore, that clay is the cause of the pot? It is simply arbitrary on our part to select one of several things and call it the cause. It is not right then, to say that clay is the cause of the pot. **The most appropriate way of expressing is:—The pot as produced depending on clay.** Thus, the most scientific and rational explanation of a thing is possible only according to the Law of Paticca Samuppada.

APPLICATION OF THE LAW TO EXPLAIN ILL.

15. The Lord Buddha meditated over the cause of death, decay and misery. Unlike the then superstitious people, he did not believe that our miseries are due to the wrath of different gods and goddesses. He had a scientific spirit in his quest. He tried to trace human miseries upwards in the series of Paticca Samuppada.

16. What death, decay, etc., are due to? On what

does Dukkha depend? What is the next previous phenomenon to them?

(i) **They depend upon birth**—it occurred to him. For, these take place only after a man is born; thus they depend upon birth.

On what does birth depend?

(ii) **Birth depend on bhava or existence.** . Nothing comes out of nothing. A thing is produced out of **something.** So, birth, is not possible if there is no previous existence of a human personality. The personality is not born out of nothing. The previous existence of it, of whatever nature it may be, is sure to be believed in.

The personality of a man consists in nothing but his peculiar ambitions, attainments, failures, hopes, disappointments and so on. These do not begin with our birth; for, beginning always suggests some previous existence. The present life is not altogether a new current, but it is in the continuation of one previous to it.

On What Does Bhava Depend?

(iii) **Bhava depends upon clinging.** Our life is a chain of constant clingings for the attainment of what we seek after, to adjust ourselves in the world. Eating, drinking, walking and the smallest action we perform are meant to bring about this necessary adjustment. We cannot conceive of a man who has got absolutely no clingings however weak they may be. Thus, it is our clingings, or strivings on which our Bhava or existence depends.

On What Does Clinging Depend?

(iv) **Clinging depends upon desire.** If there is no

desire, how CAN ONE HAVE Any clinging? A man gets the desire to become a conqueror, he then clings and strives, or struggles for the attainment. So, clinging depends upon desire.

On What Does Desire Depend?

(v) **Desire depends upon feeling.** It is only when we get an agreeable feeling that we have a desire to enjoy it. A self touch or a beautiful sight awakes desires. So, desire depends upon feeling.

On What Does Feeling Depend?

(vi) **Feeling depends upon contact or touch.** When our senses come in contact with the outer objects, then alone do we feel them. So feeling depends upon contact.

On What Does Contact Depend?

(vii) **Contact depends upon the six sense organs and their objects.** If we have no eyes and no sights to see, how can there be any contact? So contact depends upon the six sense organs and their respective objects.

On What Do These Six Depend?

(viii) **They depend upon name and form.** The six bases are either Name or Form. All sensible objects are Name and Form. No object is perceived which has not got a Name or a Form. So, the six senses depend on Name and Form.

On What Do Name and Form Depend?

(ix) **They depend upon consciousness.** A name has got no sense in it, and is mere void if we have no consciousness

of the object, "Smith," a name, means nothing to us if we do not know who he is, what is he, and other particulars. Similarly, a form is also meaningless without a consciousness of the object. A picture of a fruit, we have never seen or tasted, does not mean anything at all. So Name and Form depend upon consciousness.

On What Does Consciousness Depend?

(x) **Consciousness depends upon previous impressions.** I am conscious of a friend of mine, Mr. Fernando. What does this mean? Well, it means, that I have got so many impressions about him:—He comes from Ceylon, he is a young man, he is making researches in the treatment of Rubber trees, and so on.

If I eliminate these impressions one by one, at the end, I shall have no consciousness at all of Mr. Fernando. Thus, consciousness consists in a series of impressions. So consciousness depends upon impressions.

On What Does Impressions Depend?

(xi) **Impressions depend upon ignorance.** This ignorance consists in taking a thing to be permanent and unchanging from the real metaphysical sight, nothing remains the same for two consecutive moments. Everything is undergoing a constant process of its own.

All the impressions, I have got about Mr. Fernando, I associate with him. But in reality, he is not the same man as he was the day before. What right then, have I got to associate those impressions with him? **This act of associating impressions depends on our real ignorance, for nothing is permanent.**

Everything in the world is transitory. One who has

realised this, the Highest Wisdom, cannot consider a thing to be the same as it was a moment before. Thus, he cannot fall into this ignorance of associating impressions, i.e. Sankhara.

17. When there is no Sankhara there cannot be any consciousness. If no consciousness, no Name and Form. Is no Name and form, no six bases. If no six bases, no contact. If no contact, no feeling. If no feeling, no desire. If no desire, no clinging. If no clinging, no existence of human life. If no existence, no birth. If no birth, no Death, Decay and Misery.

18. Thus, the Lord realised the series of Paticca Samuppada under the Holy Bodhi tree, at Buddha-gaya. This was the **Great Enlightenment** which dawned upon Him.

19. The Buddha got up in perfect Bliss and uttered:—

"Aneka jati-samsaram sandhavissam anibbisam,

Gaha-Karakam gavesanto dukkha jati punappunam,

Gaha-Karaka, ditthosi, puna geham nakahasi,

Sabba te phasuka bhagga, gahakutam visankhitam,

Visankhara gatam cittam, tanhanam khayamajjhaga,

Anicca vata sankhara uppadavaya Dhammino,

Uppajjitva nirujjhanti tesam upasamo sukho,"

or

"For many lives, I was running restlessly after a search of the 'House-Builder' (Tanha) undergoing miseries again and again.

O House-Builder! You are found out. You cannot build the house again. All your beams are broken down. The house-tower has come down. The mind is now free from all Sankhara. Tanha (Desire) has ceased altogether.

All Sankharas are impermanent (transitory). They rise and disappear. Their final disappearance is the Highest Bliss."

Let us then realise the transitoriness of the world, and meditate upon it. It is the Highest Wisdom.

2. The First Sermon To Benares.

1. Now, the Buddha saw that the Doctrine realised by Him was too high and too deep for an ordinary man, entangled in the attachments of the world, to understand. But, He thought that the five ascetics who practised austerities with Him at Uruvela, might understand the Doctrine, for, they were sincere in their quest and were intelligent at the same time. The Lord then determined to preach His Doctrine to these five ascetics first of all. They were at that time residing at Isipatan, modern Saranath, near Benares; so the Lord set out towards that direction.

Meets Upaka.

2. When Lord Buddha was going from Gaya to Kashi, where He gave out His **first sermon,** He met Upaka, a mendicant of some other sect. Upaka saw the bright and prepossessing appearance of the Buddha and inquired "Friend! where are you bound for?" To which replying, the Lord said, "Dhammacakkam pavattetum gaccham Kasinam puram" or **"I am going to the city of Kashi to turn the wheel of Religion."** So, the first sermon, the Buddha gave out at Isipatan (Kashi) was called "Dhamma-Cakka-Pavattana-Sutta" or The Sermon of Turning the Wheel of Religions.

This Sutra of the Buddha is considered second to no other, in importance and depth, in the whole of the Tripitka, which describes almost all the aspects of the Dhamma in a concise and clear way.

3. The sermon is very significantly named "The Turning of the Wheel of Religions. The Pali phrase "cakkapavattana" or "turning the wheel" means to **revolutionise.** The Buddha gave a new conception of religion. This sermon made an epoch in the history of religious thoughts.

At Benares With The Five Mendicants.

4. When the five mendicants saw the Buddha coming to them from a distance, they settled amongst themselves:—

"See, Siddhartha, who gave up all austerities and fed and clothed himself like a layman, is approaching us. We should neither welcome him with any respect, nor stand up to receive him. He may sit among us of his own accord, if he likes."

5. But, as the Buddha approached nearer, they could not keep themselves on the settlement, they had come to amongst themselves. They all stood up in His honour. One of them took His bowl, another took His robes, and another began to arrange a seat for Him to sit on. Another brought water for His ablution.

6. The Buddha sat down and said, "Friends, I am now fully Enlightened. Pay heed to me—I will preach to you the Doctrine, I have realised. If you act accordingly you must get what you search for."

The five medicants said, "Siddhartha, when you could not succeed in realising the Truth at the time, when you were practising austerities, how can we except you now to

be fully Enlightened, when you feed and clothe yourself like a layman?"

The Buddha said, "Did I ever tell you before that I was a Buddha? Now, I know I am such; I claim to be a Buddha. Give your ears to me. I will preach."

7. The five mendicants, then consented to hear the sermon of the Lord.

The Lord Spoke.

"O Bhikkhus!" The mendicants should avoid the two extremes.

Which two?

"(1) To make the enjoyments of the worldly pleasures one's chief end, which is low, unwise and fit for bad people only.

"(2) To practise austerities and asceticism, which is painful, harmful and done by the ignorant only.

"O Bhikkhus! avoiding these two extremes, the Buddha has found out the Middle Path, which is wise, for the attainment of the highest knowledge and the realisation of complete salvation or Nibbana.

"Which is the **Middle Path** the Buddha has found out?

"This is the Middle Path:—The Eightfold Path. That is:—(1) Right understanding (2) Right resolution (3) Right speech (4) Right action (5) Right livelihood (6) Right effort (7) Right thinking and (8) Right meditation.

"O Bhikkhus! this is the Middle Path.....which is for the realisation of Nibbana....."

8. The Lord had Himself tried both the extremes. As Prince Siddhartha he tried the enjoyments of all possible worldly pleasure; but he saw that they were transitory and leading to lamentation and anxieties only. He tried asceticism also at Uruvela, but found it very painful and useless for a realisation of the Truth.

9. He therefore, in his very first sermon, forbids them for a mendicant. The **Middle Path** or the Eightfold Path is a path of the highest knowledge, purest morality and soundest sentiments—which leads to the Perfect Evolution of a man and Complete Emancipation.

What Is Emancipation.

10. Some may question: What is this Emancipation? Emancipation from what? What is the Bondage, we seek to be emancipated from and how the Middle Path alone is the way to realise it?

Compared To The Medical Science.

11. The Dhamma is very well compared to a Medical Science. The Buddha is himself called the "Best Physician.'

12. The Medical Science cannot be complete unless it consists of four factors in it. It must tell:—

1. What a disease is.

2. What is the cause of disease.

3. What is the right prescription for the removal of the disease.

4. What is the ideal "Health," one can strive to attain.

BUDDHISM AIMS AT A COMPLETE AND FINAL REMOVAL OF ALL ILL.

Unless a Doctor knows these four, he cannot be expected to cure a patient.

13. These four factors of the Medical Science correspond exactly to the **"Four Noble Truths"** of Buddhism.

14. If we reflect, even for a few moments, we see how many and how terrible are the sufferings which Humanity endures. The world is full of misery. Hunger, thirst, cold, heat, disappointment, loss, old age, sickness, and death are common to all, who live—be he rich or poor, a king or a beggar. Human life is a constant struggle to avoid these pains as much as we can. Each act, we perform, is meant to make ourselves convenient, and to avoid some shortness or pain, that we feel, however slight it may be. We take food, when we feel hungry or put on a coat when we feel cold.

15. **Buddhism aims at a Complete and Final freedom from all human miseries**— Emancipation or Nibbana. Food or a warm coat do not remove hunger or cold **finally**; for, next day again, the same hunger is felt, and the same cold is experienced, as soon as the coat is put off.

16. **A final and complete** removal of all miseries, means that neither any particle of a misery should exist, nor should it return ever in future.

17. The Buddha alone taught the **Science of Emancipation,** which, just like those of the Medical Science, consists of four factors in it.

1. Suffering.
2. The cause of suffering.

3. The way out of suffering.

4. Emancipation or Nibbana.

18. These four factors are known as **"The Arya Satyas, or the Noble Truth.**

(1) SUFFERING: The First Noble Truth.

19. The Buddha said:—

"O Bhikkhus! Suffering is a noble truth. Birth is suffering: old age, sickness, death association of the undesired ones, separation of the loved ones, failure in the attainment of a desired object—all are suffering. In short, all the components of the five Khandhas (Material and Mental) are suffering."

20. (It is becoming a sort of fashion amongst some men of the present day to condemn Buddhism, by calling it "Pessimism," for it shows that the world is full of sufferings, miseries and pains. No, Buddhism is not pessimism. Pessimism believes that the world is full of miseries, **and there is no way out of them. Buddhism on the other hand teaches the surest and the only way out of them.)**

21. The materialists say:—Yes, there are both miseries and pleasures in the world. The only thing that we can do is to try as much as we can, to avoid one and gain the other. The grains are covered with husks. If we want to get grains, we must take the trouble of removing the husk away from them. Therefore, avoid miseries and try to get the greatest amount of the worldly pleasures.

What Is Pleasure?

But, let us see what this pleasure is, we should strive for.

Illustration.

22. Suppose a very poor man, almost starving for days together earns one dollar after his day's labour. Just imagine, how happily he will return home that evening, to feed himself and his children. But, if a lawyer, or a doctor, earning one hundred dollars daily by chance, gets only one, after his day's labour, how much sad he would be on that day! Why? The same single dollar was an excessive joy to one man, and utter sadness to the other! How is that?

23. In reality, **There is no objective pleasure or pain.** It is, **"Comparatively less pain,"** which we consider to be pleasure. It is painful, evidently, to earn a single dollar after one day's hard labour, but it gave pleasure to the poor man, because he was in a greater distress.

24. To earn a hundred dollars again, would be painful to one, who daily earns a thousand. Thus, you cannot say—pleasure is this or that; for, that again is pain to others, who are a degree higher in life. There are grades of pleasure and pain no doubt, but no objective ones. A middle-class-man feels himself better-placed, when he compares himself with a poor man; but feels very much dejected when he compares himself with a rich millionaire. In this series of pleasures and pains, we human beings constantly go up and down. We think that there is pleasure in the attainment of a thing; we desire and cling after it. When we have got it, it loses all the charms it had, and we do not rest satisfied with it; we again seek pleasure in something else and run after that. Thus, pleasure is a station always ahead to us. We can run as fast as we can to get it, but we cannot; for, it too shifts on and on with the same speed, leaving ourselves always in disappointment.

By the word "Dukkha," the first Noble Truth, the Lord meant this very **run of life,** of gain and loss, hope and

disappointment. Buddhism is not meant for one, who enjoys this run, but for one who is tired of it and seeks to get rid of it. Those, who like to run after pleasure may do that, till they are exhausted.

The world is like a pleasurable cushion bed, with painful thorns spread on it. One, who wants to enjoy the soft touch of the cushion, must be, at the same time, prepared to experience the prick of the thorns, spread on it. You can think yourself whether such a bed is pleasure or pain.

The Lord Buddha pointed out to death decay, lamentations and anxieties to be the thorns of human life, and so it is "Dukkha" or suffering. No one can deny it, for, we all feel its existence most strongly than any thing else.

(II) **THE CAUSE OF SUFFERING, Second Noble Truth.**

What is then, the cause of our suffering?

1. The wrath of gods and goddesses, the primitive believe. They believed that an attack of a powerful enemy, disappointment in love, a drought or an earthquake, all were caused by wrathful gods. They worshipped and offered them sacrifices, to keep them favourable.

2. The Christians believe that man became sinful and miserable because Adam ate the fruit of the forbidden tree.

3. The Mohammedans explain the same by the aribitrary Supreme Will of Allah or God.

4. All such explanations of a thing cannot satisfy a Buddhist, for, he wants a scientific explanation and not a superstitious one. A scientific cause is that which explains on reasonable grounds, and not by a belief in any superstit-

ious superhuman agent—that which we can see ourselves in our life.

5. The Lord said:—**The cause of suffering is our own Tanha, or desire, (attachment, temptation, love.)** A man feels the loss of a thing more painfully, the more he is attached to it. A man weeps and feels himself miserable, if his house is on fire, because he loves it; but he does not feel such when the house of a stranger is being burnt. Wherever there is attachment, desire or love, there we find all sorts of miseries.

6. The Buddha said:—

"O Bhikkhus! **The cause of suffering is** a noble truth. It is **DESIRE** which causes rebirth, which makes us run after the enjoyments and pleasures of the world."

Desire Causes Re-birth.

7. Now, what is that in which a "life" consists?

We may read a life of Shakespeare the poet, or of Napoleon the conqueror, or if Siddhartha, the Buddha; but then, what is that fundamental factor by which each of them is guided?

Well, the life of Shakespeare is guided by **desire to paint human types** of characters or to express the subtle sentiments of love in song and melody. We read in his life, how far he achieved in the field, and how far he met with failures. The life of Napoleon is guided by **desire to conquer** and establish kingdoms. We read in his life what he did for that, where he succeeded and how he failed. The life of Siddhartha is guided by **desire to conquer suffering** and we read in his life how he left his palace for that, how he practised austerities, how he meditated, and how he got Nibbana.

8. Thus, our life consists in our own peculiar desire, and our clingings for that. We cannot imagine of a man, who has no desire at all; for then, we take away the very life of a man.

9. Wherever there is Desire, there is clinging for its realisation, successes and failures, hopes and disappointments; thus, the process of life goes on. Where there is no desire, there is no clinging, no life, no old age, no death.

10. The process of life goes on, as long as Desire is there, which is its guiding factor. A change in the physical body cannot stop it, however great it may be. Death is but a change in the physical body. The life process must go on, if desire is there even after death. The Lord said therefore, **"Tanha ponobhavika."** Desire is the cause of rebirth that is, it keeps the continuity of the life-process even after death, and makes us run after the enjoyments and pleasures of the world.

11. Thus, desire or "Tanha" is the cause of suffering. If we want to get rid of suffering, the only way is to conquer our own Desire. When there will be no desire, there will be no life or suffering. **The way to** Emancipation is therefore, the third Noble Truth.

(III) THE WAY OUT OF SUFFERING—the Third Noble Truth.

The cause of suffering is "Desire." Conquer "Desire" and there will be no "suffering." But, how to conquer desire?

The Buddha has compared **Desire to burning fire.** This desire-fire is fed and kept burning by the fuels of our own vices or "Aku sala" The more vices we commit, the brighter does the desire-fire blaze.

A boy sees a beautiful pencil of his classmate, and gets the desire to have it. He reflects, "Should I steal it? No, it is a crime. Moreover, if I am caught, I will be hated by my friends as a thief. The teacher also may punish me severely." Even then he cannot check the desire of having the beautiful pencil, and silently steals it. Next time, he sees a "Parker fountain pen" of his mate and again becomes desirous to have it. This time, the resistance is not so strong as before, because the desire is made stronger by the first vice of stealing; and steals the pen. In this way, the more he steals, the stronger the temptation to steal becomes. Thus, all vices, we do, deletes tempt us to repeat the same **again and again and make our desire stronger and stronger.**

(a) **SILA.**

1. The first thing therefore is to keep ourselves away from all vicious and sinful deeds. It is called "Sila by the Buddha. "Sabba papassa akarnam" or not to do any sinful act. If we practise Sila and do not commit any sin, our desire-fire will not get new fuel to go on burning with. It is why the Buddhist precepts are all in the "Negative." **Do not** feed the desire-fire by sins.

2. But the sins, being committed by us for numberless lives, from time immemorial, have already made our Desire, very intense. We may not add to its strength by committing new sins, even then, it is sufficiently strong to keep the flow of the life for ages and ages. Its intensity is therefore, to be counteracted and made weaker.

(b) **SAMADHI.**

1. This we can do by "Meditation" or Samadhi. By meditating on Universal love and friendship, we can weaken the sentiments of enmity, hatred and envy. By meditating on the transitoriness of the worldly pleasures, we can weaken our temptation to run after them.

2. A thief knows, that to steal is a very bad crime, yet he seeks an opportunity to rob others, and never misses it when he gets one. Why? Why does a man, knowing perfectly well a thing to be bad, run after it? Well, it is so, because by constant repetitions of the act, the impression has become so strong that we fail to check it, though desiring very much to do. A man weeps, when he gets the bad results of his evil-doings, and likes very much to give them up. But, again after a time, he forgets everything and does the same. Such is the control of the temptations on us. If we want to make these temptations weaker, meditation is the only way. If a criminal likes to give up the crime, **he is used to, he should meditate daily on the evils of it.** He will then, be able to make its temptation weaker; and one day he might be free from the crime.

3. The best object of meditation is "Anicca and Dukkha." Everything in this world is "anicca" or temporary; and "dukkha" or misery.

4. Nations grow and die out; empires are founded and lost; mighty palaces are built and lost in the dust—such is the way of the world. Beautiful flowers blossom and attract all who pass by, but, only the other day, it is faded and dried up. Its petals all drop down and is forgotten altogether. All enjoyments and high attainments of the world are only a moment's show. One, who takes pleasure in them, has to lament and weep, when they are lost, and undergoes much suffering. Since, nothing lasts in this world, one should not take delight in it. We should meditate over this transitoriness of the world and the various sufferings.

(c) **PANNA.**

1. To realise "Anicca and Dukkha" is the **Highest Wisdom,** after which, a man can no longer be entangled in

them. A child runs after a shadow as long as he does not know it is such. The moment he knows it, he will not care for that.

2. The "Highest Wisdom" kills the Desire completely, which is at the root of all suffering.

3. Thus, the Buddha taught:—Desire is the cause of suffering. To get rid of suffering, desire must be finally and fully annihilated. Do not add strength of desire by committing sins, that is, 1. **Sila.** Make your desire weaker by meditation, that is 2. **Samadhi.** Annihilate Desire finally by realising the Highest Wisdom, that is, 3. **Panna.**

This is the way out of suffering, the Lord calls it the Middle Path, because it avoided the two extremes, as we have already seen. These three 1. Sila, 2. Samadhi and 3. Panna, when analysed, again for a clearer understanding give eight factors. Thus:—

5. **SILA:—**

1. **Right speech.**
2. **Right action.**
3. **Right livelihood.**
4. **Right endeavour.**

SAMADHI:—

5. **Right mindfulness.**
6. **Right meditation.**

PANNA:—

7. **Right understanding.**
8. **Right resolution.**

This is the **Middle Path,** or the **Eightfold Path of Buddhism.**

(IV) **NIBBANA—the Fourth Noble Truth.**

1. With the annihilation of Desire, the life-process, with all its suffering does no more continue. This is Nibbana—an Emancipation from all sorrows and sufferings.

2. As long as the electric current is coming the fan continues to move. Switch off the current, and the fan stops. The cause being absent, there is no effect.

3. Just in the same way, with the stoppage of Desire, the life-process ceases to proceed on. It is foolish to ask, "What becomes of a man, after attaining Nibbana?" for, it is just the same to ask, "What becomes of the movement of the fan, when the current is switched off?" There is no movement of the fan, because there is no current. There is no suffering, because there is no Desire.

4. The Buddha again said to the five mendicants:— "O Bhikkhus! I did not ever claim to have got the Realisation, before I myself attained it. Now, since I have got the Highest Wisdom, and annihilated Desire completely, I am Buddha, freed from the cycle of Birth and Death."

5. With full satisfaction, the five mendicants greeted to all what the Lord said. After this sermon, Kondanna realised truly, "Everything dies away, what is produced," the Highest Knowledge.

6. The Lord saw the brightened appearance of Kondanna, and spoke out, "Kondanna has realised it, Kondanna has realised it."

7. The five mendicants were fully convinced of the Doctrine, the Lord taught; they became the first disciples of the Buddha. They were known as Panca-vaggiya Bhikkhus.

3. ORGANISATION OF THE SANGHA.

1. There lived in Benares Yasa Kulaputta, the son of a rich merchant. He was also very much disgusted with the pleasures of the world, and approached Buddha for guidance. The Buddha taught him His Doctrine; he was converted and made a disciple. Then, his four friends named Vimala, Subahu, Purnajina, and Gavampati, all sons of rich merchants in Benares, also followed the lead of Yasa Kulaputta, left their homes and became Bhikkhu disciples of the Buddha. Next, another fifty of their friends took example and joined them, making a total of sixty-one Arahats including the Buddha at their head.

2. The Sangha was formed. The Lord addressed them. "Go ye, Bhikkhus, and wander forth for the gain of the many, for the welfare of the many, in compassion for the world, for the good, for the gain, for the welfare of gods and men. Proclaim O Bhikkhus, the Doctrine glorious, preach ye a life of holiness, perfect and pure."

3. After sending away His first sixty disciples, the Buddha then went to Uruvela. On the way, He sat down for meditation under a tree in a deep and calm jungle. There came an excited band of thirty princes madly searching after a prostitute, who had stolen away their valuable jewelleries. They inquired the Buddha if He had seen a woman passing that way.

The Buddha said very mildly, "Princes, should you search after a mean prostitute or after your ownselves?"

The princes became very much curious—what does the hermit mean by this? They said, "Pray, tell us how can we search after our ownselves?"

The Buddha preached His Doctrine to them. Their eyes were opened. They realised how foolish they had been so long. They readily became His disciples, and followed Him.

4. Kashyapa, the chief of the Jatila sect, also heard the Doctrine and became a disciple follower of the Lord.

5. With these new disciples Lord Buddha, once more entered Rajagaha, the capital of King Bimbisara. The King came with his nobles and courtiers to greet the Buddha. They were all converted as lay disciples. The King offered the Veluwana Vihara to Buddha, and himself stayed there for two months.

6. During these two months Sariputta and Moggallana, two famous religious teachers, came to see the Buddha, after receiving the Doctrine from one of those sixty Bhikkhus. Both paid their homage to the Buddha and became disciples.

1. King Suddhodana sent his chief minister with a thousand men to invite the Buddha to Kapilavatthu. These men came to Rajagaha; but after listening to the Doctrine of the Buddha, all of them were converted and ordained as Bhikkhus. They forgot for what they were sent, and did not return.

It was not until the tenth similar party came that the Buddha was told about King Suddhodana's invitation.

So, the Buddha with all His retinue of Bhikkhus, all Arhatas, started from Rajagaha for Kapilavatthu.

3. Great rejoicings prevailed in the city of Kapilavatthu when after so many years their beloved Prince returned to them as a Buddha, with the yellow robe of a recluse on His body and a begging bowl in his hand. The heart of Suddhodana, a father's heart, throbbed with an excessive joy and sorrow both, when he came down to meet his son, now a Buddha. He could have embraced Him and called Him fondly 'My son!' but the august Holiness of the Buddha filled him with utter reverence and he bowed down at His feet with tears in the eyes.

4. All heard Him and became His disciples. The Buddha took Nanda, His own cousin, and Rahula, His son, amongst the Bhikkhus and gave them the yellow robe.

LAST DAYS OF THE BUDDHA.

Thereafter the Buddha spent a life prolonged over forty-five years in travelling from place to place and preaching the Doctrine to all who would listen. At the age of over eighty years Buddha realised that the time had come for His pari-Nibbana.

At Kusinara He lay Himself down in open air between two Sala trees, surrounded by His disciples; He then entered into Dhyana and passing through its successive stages attained Pari-Nibbana.

CHAPTER IV.

BUDDHIST LITERATURE.

1. After the Great Decease of the Buddha His disciples assembled at Rajagaha to collect all the teachings of the Lord, lest they might be forgotten or misunderstood in the future ages to come. Great was the assembly of Bhikkhus, all Arhatas, who had come to join hands in this noble task. Ananda, Kashyapa, and many others who had attended upon the Buddha personally, and heard His teachings with their own ears were present on the occasion.

2. Everything was written down on palm leaves and collected together in a basket. At the end of the Great Council, all the writings were put in three baskets: the first containing the Suttas, or the discourses of the Buddha and His chief disciples given at the different places on different occasions to different people; the second containing the Vinaya, or the disciplinary laws and regulations given by the Buddha for the guidance of monks and monasteries; the third containing the Abhidhamma or the metaphysical exposition of the Dhamma.

3. They are called the Tri-Pitakas or the Three-Baskets. The Tri-Pitaka consists of the following books:—

A. The Sutta Pitaka.

1. Digha Nikaya. 2. Majjhima Nikaya. 3. Sanyutta Nikaya. 4. Anguttara Nikaya, and 5. Khuddaka Nikaya.

The last is further sub-divided into 15 books:—

1. Khuddaka Patha. 2. Dhammapada. 3. Udana. 4. Iti Vuttaka. 5. Sutta Nipata. 6. Vimana Vatthu. 7.

Petavatthu. 8. Theragatha. 9. Therigatha. 10. Jataka. 11. Niddesa. 12. Patisambhida. 13. Apadana. 14. Buddhavansa, and 15. Cariya Pitaka.

B. The Vinaya Pitaka Consists Of:—

1. Parajika Pali 2. Pacittya Pali	Vibhanga
3. Mahavagga Pali 4. Cullavagga Pali	Khandaka
5. Parivara Pali	

C. The Abhidamma Pitaka Consists Of:—

1. Dhamma Sangani. 2. Vihbanga. 3. Kathavatthu. 4. Puggala Pannatti. 5. Dhatukatha. 6. Yamaka. 7. Patthana.

4. These books are the surest and nearest approach to the Doctrine, taught by the Lord. As years passed on various commentaries and independent books were written on these and the literature grew in bulk. Out of the later additions, the Visuddhimagga, of Buddhaghosa and the Milinda Panha command great respect and reliability.

CHAPTER V.

THE SINGULARITY OF BUDDHISM.

1. The Tri-Pitaka however, should not be understood to occupy the same position amongst the Buddhists as the Bible with the Christians, as the Quoran with the Mohammedans, or the Vedas with the Hindus.

2. A Buddhist is not a slave to the books of the Tri-Pitaka. He does not blindly accept them to be ultimate truth, coming from a Divine Being, on 'faith.'

3. The Buddha never demanded people to put faith in Him, even if he did not understand Him.

Kalama Sutta.

4. Once the Kalamas came to the Buddha and said, "Lord! Brahmins and other sectarian teachers visit us and preach their respective doctrines. They say, what they teach is the only truth.

Lord! We are thus, at a loss to make out what to accept and what to reject."

5. In answer to this, the Buddha did not say to them, "Put faith in me, I am the son of God. I will take you to heaven." Neither did He condemn the teaching of His opponents as sacrilege and heretics.

6. What He advised them was very human and wise; for, He said:—

"Do not believe in anything on mere hear-say; do not believe in traditions, because they are old and handed down through generations; do not believe in rumours or in anything because people talk much about it; do not believe simply because the written testimony of some ancient sage is shown to thee; never believe anything because presumption is in its favour, or because the custom of many years leads thee to regard it as true, do not believe anything on the mere authority of thy teacher or priests. **Whatever according to thy own experience and after thorough investigation agrees with thy reason, and is conducive to thy own weal and to that of all other living beings, that accept as truth and live accordingly."**

7. One may therefore, study the Doctrine of the Buddha, think over it calmly and wisely, and may accept it if it appeals to him, and he may reject it if he cannot understand it. Buddhism does not compel any one to believe in it blindly, for, a blind faith will be always a hindrance to the advancement in life. **The spirit of Buddhism is purely rational.**

Origin Of God-Conception.

8. When civilization was in its infancy and there was no science, primitive people, out of fear and admiration towards the phenomenal wonders, had believed in different spirits and gods and formed religions of their own. According to their respective standards different nations founded different gods and different faiths.

9. First, people had many gods—gods of trees, streams, lightning, storm, winds, the sun, and all other terrestrial phenomena. From such gods and these exact myriads, of each and every act of nature, there grew as it was realised that the phenomena of the Universe were not many but were One, Monotheistic God of most recent ages. Even this

'Singular God' varied much as between nation and nation, people and people. The Hindu God is quite different from that of the Mohammedans, which again is of a different conception from the Christian God. Thus, we see numberless religions existing, one differing from the other very widely.

Failures Of God-Religions.

10. All these God-religions got their respective scriptures, which they professed to be coming directly from God, as Revelation. They gave out that their religion stood for Universal Peace, and Universal Brotherhood, and such high ideals.

11. However great the ideals of the religions might be, the history of the world shows that the religions up to the present day have only helped in spreading foolish superstitions, have stood against science and advancement of true knoweldge, have led to party-makings, quarrels, ill-feelings, murders and wars.

12. No Holy War, whether of ancient Mexico; the Crusades of Mediaeval Times; or a Jihad of more recent date would ever be possible without a Religious-fanaticism to begin them and a priesthood to fan the flames. Socrates was poisoned to death, not because he told the truth, but because the truth he told clashed with faith. Brotherhood has been preached by all, but so far, they have succeeded only in practising bitter enmities.

The Cause Of Failure.

13. And, why have the religions become so bad in spite of their high ideals? There must be some flaw in the very conception or religion with which men followed it; and this is nothing but their demand for a blind faith which created

party-feelings in one religion from the other and made people biassed to what they had held once.

14. The Buddha had realised this danger verily and said: "Bhikkhus! I preach you my Doctrine as a raft, to cross and not to be possessed by you."

15. The right use of religion is to use it as a raft. With the help of a raft one can cross a stream. It is extremely for our practical purpose. If one possesses a raft, but does not use it to cross the ford, it is of no use.

16. Religion, just in the same way concerns our practical life. **It is to guide and regulate our conduct in the world.** Religion tells us what to do and what to know. If we do not do or know accordingly, religion is of no good to us. One is not a Buddhist because he possesses this religion, but because he lives as the Buddha taught. **A religion is said to be possessed by one when it becomes a case of belief in place of acts—what essential living is given over to dead functions and ceremonials.** A religion, being thus possessed becomes not of value but an actual hindrance. The failure of religions is due to this only, that people looked upon them as something to put faith in.

17. A RELIGION, BASED ON FAITH IS THE CAUSE OF ALL VICES. A RELIGION, WHICH GUIDES OUR LIFE TO PURITY IS THE TRUE RELIGION.

18. Buddhism is not based on faith. One is not a Buddhist, because he puts faith in Buddha, as a God or Redeemer, for, then he begins to possess the religion.

To do a thing and not to believe a thing, is the true spirit in which the Buddha taught His Dhamma.

WHAT IS THE POSITION OF THE BUDDHA IN BUDDHISM?

19. The Buddha Himself has said, **"O Bhikkhus! take me as your guide and teacher."**

If we do not follow the way, the guide directs to, we are sure to be led astray; but then the guide is not at fault. The guide can only direct the way. If the traveller does not follow it, the guide cannot help. Similarly, the Lord Buddha has shown us the way to "Emancipation from all sorrows" or "Nibbana." It is now left to us to traverse the directed path or not.

Offering Flowers.

20. If one praises his guide very highly, offers him flowers, bows down before him very low, and does all homages to him; but does not regulate himself according to his instructions, should he reach his goal? Certainly not! So, if we do not live a life, as the Lord taught, no amount of offering flowers and prayers can help us.

21. I do not mean to say that to offer flowers to the image of the Buddha is useless and Un-Buddhistic. It is rather our duty to do that before One, who was our true Teacher. But then, to follow our teacher is one thing, and to pay regards to him is quite different. A Buddhist never offers flowers in the temple with the foolish hope of gaining the favour of the Buddha, who will take him to heaven, but he does so, because he feels so much obliged to his Teacher.

Caste-System.

22. The Buddha was the first man to protest against the degrading caste-system, which had created the feelings

of higher and lower in man and man. The Buddha said, "A man does not become an outcast or a Brahmana by birth; it is by action that one becomes an out-caste or Brahmana.

23. He admitted Bhikkhus in His Order, people from all castes and creeds. Barbers, smiths, and all held high respect and position in the Sangha, who had attained Arhantship.

24. Buddhism has preached the best tolerance and complete freedom of thoughts. Buddhism has spread in the world not by sword and fire, nay, not by any coercion, or persecution; but by its own merits and lofty teachings.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DHAMMA.

1. The Three Principal Truths.

The three principal truths on which the Dhamma, taught by the Buddha, is based are *(a)* Anicca or "all is impermanence;" *(b)* Anatta or "all is substance-soulless;" and *(c)* Dukkha or "all is misery."

A. All Is Impermanence.

1. The Universe is in a state of constant flux. Nothing remains the same for two consecutive moments. The Reality is not a stagnant pit but a rushing stream—a current. There is no being, there is only a becoming.

2. Construction (=Uppada) and destruction (=nirodha), these two factors are never at rest. One ripple rises up; sinking down, it causes another to rise and so on at infinitum. The rising of one ripple depends upon the sinking of another, and the sinking of one depends upon the rising of another. Thus, the current flows on.

3. From the very moment a thing is built, it tends down to destruction with all certainty. The newly erected beautiful house becomes older day by day; till one day it is brought down, and not even a trace of that is to be found. Each beating of our heart is bringing us closer to our death.

4. Impermanence is not a planned-out philosophical postulate, but a fact, a reality, which we feel and experience so very strongly in our every-day-life.

5. It is due to our own ignorant attachment, that we fail to view this truth and take the world to be the same. What does it mean when we point out a thing and say, **"it is very lasting?"** Does it not mean that it can serve our attached purpose for a long time? What more than this?

6. My friend told me that he was using a particular make of cycle for a period of more than thirty years. During these thirty years he had so many times to change and replace almost each and every part of it, to get it repaired, overhauled and varnished; still he said that it was the same cycle he purchased thirty years before. It is so, because his attached purpose of riding the cycle was fulfilled all along. And therefore he continued to identify it to be the same. Though, we have to make such identification everywhere for our practical purpose, but from the real metaphysical insight such terms as 'lasting' or 'identical' are gravest ignorance.

7. In the Tri-Pitaka, whenever a disciple is said to have got the true insight or the Dhamma, he realises, "yamkimci uppadadhammam sabbam tam nirodhadhammam" or "Whatever rises up is surely passing away." A true realisation of this truth can take place only when one is free from all attachment whatsoever

8. As long as we have not dispelled our 'attachment' or Tanha, the ignorance-of-identification or **Sakkaya-ditthi** will be there making us incapable of realising the true impermanent nature of the 'Dhammas.'

9. 'Abhidhamma-manavibhasasastra' says, "A day of twenty-four hours has six thousand four hundred million, ninety-nine thousand, nine hundred and eighty **'Kshanas'** or moments, and that the five **Khandas** are repeatedly produced and destroyed every **Kshana."**

10. Buddha Ghosa says in his Visuddhimagga, "Strict-

ly speaking, the life-duration of a living being is exceedingly brief, being commensurate with the period during which a thought lasts. And just as a chariot-wheel in rolling, rolls merely at one point of the tyre, and in resting rests only at one point, even so the life of a living being endures only for the brief period of one thought, and as soon as that thought has ceased, the being too is said to have ceased.

11. "Thus, the being of a past moment **has** lived, but **does** not live **nor will** it live; the being of a future moment **will** live but **has not** lived **nor does** it live; the being at the present moment **does** live but **has not** lived and will not live."

Time.

If the Reality is such, how is **time** to be understood?

12. The idea of past, present, and future comes only in connection with a thing which we take to be **identical: this** was, **this** is even now, and **this** will be in future also; or **I** was there, **I** have come here, and **I** will go there. In other words it might be said that the conception of priority and posteriority about an **identity** alone gives rise to the idea of time.

13. But, we have already seen that in this universality of impermanence identification is the gravest ignorance, which results depending on our attachment or Tanha which the Buddha has called 'Sakkayaditthi.' The idea of time therefore—past, present, and future—holds good as long as 'sakkayaditthi' is not broken.

14. When the saint succeeds in destroying this ignorance, he sees the reality in its true nakedness, unmingled with the ideas of past or future. The Buddha has called such a saint 'akappiyo,' or who is above the bondage of **Kalpa** or time.

15. In the Brahmajala sutra, Digha Nikaya, the Buddha, pointing out the cause of errors of the 62 false theories, has said that it is due to the ignorance of 'pubbanta and aparanta' or 'priority and posteriority' that all those erroneous views are arrived at.

16. In the Milinda Panha also King Milinda asks the learned Bhikkhu Nagasena, "Sir, what is the cause of time?" to which the ready reply was, "King **ignorance** is the cause of time!"

17. Mrs. Rhys Davids, in her book named "The Questions of King Milinda" has tried to mis-interpret this important point. She says that the term 'avijja' does not mean there 'ignorance' but **'unknowability.'** She being a spiritualist cannot dispense with Sakkayaditthi, therefore she has twisted the meaning in this way. This interpretation is neither in accordance with the reference nor with the standpoint of Nagasena. Moreover, how can **'unknowability'** be the cause of time, or the cause of anything? This the authoress has not explained.

Change.

18. If time is denied in Buddhism as a metaphysical reality how is change to be explained?

To understand this let us see what change is and when we become conscious of it.

19. Change is always from **this** to **that** or symbolically from X to Y. We see a small baby to-day lying flat on its cradle with tiny and tender limbs; after ten years we see him again a grown up boy, running, jumping and very talkative; and say—what a great change in him! Thus, the idea of change has come when we have abstracted from the child's life-process, two points and compared them

together—ignoring altogether the numberless points which he had to pass on in the middle. The parents of the child, who watch him oftener do not feel the change so much. The child himself, who watches his own personality more than anyone else does not feel the change at all. It is only when he becomes a second person to himself, and after an alike abstraction, views and compares two points in him, that he feels the change to some extent. Thus, there is absolutely **no change** for one who is a true associate to the flow of Reality.

20. Change, no doubt, does exist for one who abstracts from the Reality only two points X and Y, neglecting and ignoring totally—X, X2, 3, 4, 5—the points that came in the middle; but when these points are considered, change is to be felt nowhere. It is impossible to say when X ends and Y begins.

No exact moment can be pointed to when the clay has become a pot.

21. The reality is flowing like a current of stream, and so Anicca. In it, no two points can be caught as stagnant (by abstraction), compared together and got the idea of change. Such an ignorant abstraction is another phase of Sakkayaditthi.

22. Some philosophers, misunderstanding the implication of Anicca, have called Buddhism **Kshanikavada** or momentarism. No. How can **moments** be possible in the true metaphysical light? No sharp demarcation line can be drawn where one moment ends and the other begins. It is only for our own **practical purpose** that we do that.

23. The saint who has overcome this ignorance of abstraction or Sakkayaditthi, views the Anicca nature of the Dhamma with the true vision and feels **on change.** He

becomes 'Nirdvavnda,' or free from all sorts of twos, i.e. love or hatred, pleasure or displeasure and so on.

NO SUBSTANCE: NO SOUL.

The ignorance of Change has created the graver ignorance and soul.

Substance.

1. **If change is true,** there must be something on which it occurs—some basis or substance of it. A ring, a cup, a coin are all expressions—changes of the same metal gold. Gold remains the same gold 'unchanged' in all these changes. Thus, Change suggests something which remains permanent and unchanged. The Aristotelian logicians called the first **quality,** and the other **substance.** This argument was driven forward and a permanent, or Sasvata substance was begun to be believed in, as the principle.

2. Some philosophers called this permanent substance as **paramanu** or atoms, **parkriti** or the ultimate, **padartha** or realities, **brahma** or the Cosmic consciousness (those who took a spiritual view of it) and so on.

As soon as change is accepted as truth, some sort or substance=permanence—sassata is necessarily to be accepted. This is another phrase of Sakkayaditthi.

3. But, we have already seen that in the light of the Truth of Anicca **time** and **change** both disappear; and where there is no change, the ignorance of a substance also cannot stand.

4. The metal gold is the same in a ring, or a cup, or a coin, **only when we see gold from our practical point of view:** but, in the true metaphysical light no particle of

gold is the same in two consecutive moments. Gold is also undergoing the same process of Anicca. We call it gold as long as our desired attachment or Tanha is associated to it. When it is burnt and reduced to ashes, we do not call it gold, as our own purpose has ceased with it.

5. The saint who has conquered this ignorance of Substance or Sakkayaditthi views the gold and ashes in the same train.

Soul.

6. When the same, fallacy of change is applied to man or a living being, it results in the **ignorance of Soul.**

7. We are not now what we were a moment before; both physically and mentally we are changed.

In the different stages of a man's life, he undergoes radical transformation both in mind and body. In spite of all these changes we feel not the less strongly that we are the same personalities, the same identities.

8. The question which naturally arises now, is: How to explain this identity in change, the **same** in the **different**?

9. In answer to this question, some philosophers assumed the existence of a permanent Soul in man, which keeps his identity in the course of his mental and physical changes, for, it is transcendental to both mind and body. Though, a man is changed, both in mind and body, his soul remains permanent and the same, and so he feels that he is the same personality.

In short, A SOUL WAS FOUND ESSENTIAL TO BE BELIEVED IN, TO EXPLAIN IDENTITY IN CHANGE, in man.

10. Let us draw logical conclusions from the above argument and see how far does it stand a satisfactory understanding.

11. If, a permanent factor is essential to be believed in of explain identity, it must hold good everywhere; in explaining any identity in difference, be it the identity, of a chair or a house. I know my chair to be the IDENTICAL one, as I purchased a year back. I know at the same time, that it has changed much, for a leg of it is broken and the varnish too has faded much. How should I explain the identity of my chair in a course of radical changes? Should I, according to the above argument believe in a PERMANENT CHAIR SOUL—transcendental to the objective chair—which keeps the identity of the chair, behind its changes.

Then there would be a table-souls, pen-soul, and a soul for each and every object; for, they all keep their identity, though being changed. This is the result, we logically arrive at, which is evidently absurd.

12. By the term 'soul' in the just above lines I do not mean 'psychicfaculty,' but a 'permanent=unchanging=stagnant factor,' be it of any nature whatsoever. To say in a sentence—If a permanent factor is essential to explain the identity of a man (which is thought as spiritual, and is known by such names as Soul, Jiva, Atma, Purusa, etc.), it must be essential to explain the identity of any other thing, be it either chair, table or pen.

The same or the different.

13. One may raise a doubt and say—if there is no identical=permanent factor in man, then is he, who does a deed, the same or the different, as he gets the result of it?

14. The same question was put to Nagasena by the King Milinda, to which the reply was **"Neither the same nor the different."** Nagasena made it very clear to King Milinda by an illustration:—

15. "Suppose a man, O King, were to light a lamp, would it burn the night through?"

'Yes, the lamp might burn all night long.

'Now is the flame that burns in the first watch of the night, the same that burns in the second.

'No, not the same flame.

'Or, is the flame that burns in the second watch of the night, the same that burns in the third?

'No, not the same flame.

"Then, is there one lamp in the first watch, and another in the second and another in the third?

'No, the light comes from the same lamp all the night through.

16. "Just so, O King is the continuity of a person or thing maintained. One comes into being, another passes away; (and the rebirth, is as it were, simultaneous. Thus, **neither as the same nor as another** does a man go on to the last phase of his selfconsciousness)."

17. We might roughly compare here that man is a lamp, with consciousness or Citta as the flame, which is undergoing a process of its own; in a constant flux. It does not suggest that the body is permanent and stagnant; it is also undergoing its own process.

18. Thus, the man who does a deed and the man who gets the result of it, are neither the same nor the different; but there is a single flow of it where one ripple gives rise to the other.

Illustration.

19. A fire, lighted at the end of the field goes on and burns the other extreme also. Now, is the fire which gives the last burn the same fire which was lighted at the distant end or quite different? It is never the **same** fire, nor **quite different** also. But, the whole fire was a continuity=a process=a stream=a current.

20. Man's process of consciousness is just the same. Whatever good or bad is acted or thought at one end is sure to show its effect at another end.

There is no permanent factor in man: no soul, but the mind in a flux.

What is "Man?"

21. **If there is no Soul in us, what is that in which the personality of a man exists? What is 'man' does it refer to when the term "I" is used?**

22. To understand these questions some people are led to believe that there must be a 'central essence' or 'the very identity' in man; this they have called by the name of Soul, Jiva, Atma etc.

23. But, when we think wisely, no such factor is required to be maintained to understand 'man'. Man is composed of mind and matter, both of which are in a flux, in which one moment gives rise to the other on and on, till the process is stopped and extinguished in Nirvana.

24. What is a chariot? What does it refer to when the term 'chariot' is used?

There is no 'central-essence' in the chariot. The chariot is composed of the wheels, framework, yoke, spokes of the wheel, the goad, and so many other parts of it. Apart from these parts there exists no chariot. The chariot exists in and with the parts it is composed of.

THE FIVE KHANDAS.

25. Just in the same manner, 'man' also exists in and with mind and body. There is no soul. The Buddha said that when people hold that they find the much spoken of soul they really only find the bodily and the mental states which are immediate with us.

26. Let us take three examples, and try to understand in what sense the term 'I' is used by us:—

(1) When I say, "I am here," or "I was there," what does the term "I" signify?

Here, the term is used only to signify the particular location of my body. I say:—the book is there, the pen is there, and with the same stretch, I am here. Here, only the different locations of the book, the pen and "I" are pointed to: thus "I" in the above example means "My body" and nothing else.

(2) Let us take a second example:—"I think." What does the term "I" here stand for?

Certainly, not for the body, for how can thinking be attributed to body? It stands for the cognising mind, for, it is really the mind which thinks.

(3) In the third example, "I lecture," the term "I" does not stand either for the body or for mind, by themselves, **BUT FOR A JOINT ACTION OF THE TWO.** The tongue (body) cannot lecture without the thinking mind, nor can mind lecture without the tongue. Lecturing is possible, when the tongue and the mind, both co-operate in one.

27. Thus, we see that the term "I" is used sometimes for the mind, and sometimes for body, and sometimes for the body and mind: for, man really is consisted of only bodily and mental states.

28. If further analysed, there, can be five factors of them. These five are called the five Khandas, and are "(1) Rupa" (four elements, the body, the senses), senses data, (2) Vedana (Feeling-Pleasurable, painful and indifferent), (3) Sanna (Conceptional knowledge), (4) Sankhara (synthetic mental states and the synthetic functioning of compound sense-effections, compound feelings and compound concepts), (5) Vinnana (Consciousness)."

29. These five make up a whole which is man. Man exists nowhere outside these five Khandas, just as the table exists nowhere outside the four legs and so many pieces of planks, it is made of.

30. These Khandas are again, not units in themselves but composites through and through, each having their own process or continuity.

31. No static unity can be found anywhere; there is only continuity and conglomeration.

RE-BIRTH.

If there is no Identical Soul, what is that which is born and re-born?

32. It is of course, a puzzle to many. Buddhism holds that a man, dying at Benares may be born as a dog at Patna, according to his Kamma. Now, what is that which leaves the body of the dying man at Benares, travels up to Patna, and enters the newly born puppy? If there is no indentical soul which transmigrates like this, how can the position be understood? How is the death of one to be linked with birth of another.

33. Buddhism does not believe in any sort of transmigration. There is nothing which comes out of one body and enters the other.

34. Nature is governed by the Law of "Dependent Origination" or Paticca Samuppada. Everything comes into existence, depending on an instance, previous to it and everything also must give rise to an instance, depending on itself.

35. **We have already seen in the chapter on Paticca** Samuppada, that Desire gives rise to Clinging, that to Existence (or the continuity of the life-process), and that to Birth. The Desire of a dying man must give rise to Clinging, that to the Continuity of the life-process, and that to Birth.

36. There is nothing which comes out of the body of a dying man and enters the body of the newly-born puppy, but the two lives are to be understood in the same process of Desire and Clinging, one giving rise to the other.

Illustration.

War between England and France. It does not mean that one battle was going on continuously, without any break, for one hundred years. It is impossible. Really, many battles were fought, at various fields.

37. There was a 'Hundred Years' and after wide intervals. Then how change in the Body cannot stop the flow. After the death of man, the body is burned, but not the Desire, is it that all these are linked into one and called "A Hundred Years' War?"

38. Well, though there were wide intervals between one fight and the other, the feeling of enmity for a certain cause continued to be there in the two nations. This feeling of enmity and clinging to defeat one another, continued for a hundred years, so all the different fields fought at intervals and at different spots, are taken to have happened in the same process.

39. Just in the same way, the body of a man and that of a dog are two fields where the same war continues; for it is the continuation of the same flow of life—of Desire and Clinging.

40. The different battles are considered to have been fought in course of the same War, not because the **same guns** were carried from one field to the other, nor because the **same soldiers** were taken from one field to the other but because they were fought in the continuation of the same feeling of animosity between the two nations.

41. The fighting-consciousness of one field flows into the other, without a gay or break. Just so, the consciousness of a dying man flows into any other body according to his Kamma. There is no such factor which transmigrates, but it is the continuity of one fire, burnt at one end and going to the other where one flame gives rise to another and so on. It is called **'Patisandhi'** in Buddhist philosophy.

THE GUIDING PRINCIPLE OF LIFE.

42. Now, one may ask—How long does this flow of life

continue to grow on and on like this? What is the guiding and supporting principle of it?

43. The Buddha has said that it is Tanha or Attachment depending on which the life-process goes on. It will continue to proceed on and grow as ever, as long as Tanha is there.

44. We see beautiful object, get a Tanha or Attachment for it, and begin to cling (Upadana) after its attainment. We then, undergo all sorts of hopes and disappointments, successes and failures. Thus, the whole life-process goes on—the flow of consciousness is kept continuing.

45. There is no Soul or Atma. Our personality consists in the nature of our Mind—which is in flux—and for the formation of which we ourselves are responsible.

46. The Buddha has said in the opening verse of the Dhammapada:—

"All states arising have mind for their causing,

Mind for their master, of mind are the offspring....."

THE NATURE OF MIND.

47. We are constantly knowing one thing and forgetting the other.

While walking on the road, we happen to see a certain man and know him to be such; but as we pass on, his memory fades away gradually into an oblivion. By that time some other object—say a cart or a house occupies the focus of our attention and we become aware of it. As we pass on still further, that memory too fades away as above giving rise to some other.

48. Thus, we always know one thing and forget that; know another and forget that too, and so on and on. From our very birth this process of knowing and forgetting is continuously flowing without any gap whatsoever.

49. Even when we cease to receive impressions from outside—as while asleep—this process is not stopped. For then, our previous impressions themselves rise and pass away.

50. But, we do not forget, everything in the same way. A thing which draws our attention more strongly is forgotten very slowly, for, it continued to vibrate in our mind for a pretty long period of time. A thing, on the other hand, which does not draw our attention with any strength but only comes to pass before us, is forgotten very quickly.

Illustration.

51. Thus, while going on the road, the sight of an elephant lasts long to occupy our mind even after we have passed on to a great distance; but an ordinary man, with no peculiarity in him is forgotten as soon as he is out of sight.

What Is Forgotten Is Not Lost Or Gone

52. Though we forget everything that we know, sooner or later, they do exists in our mind. They are not altogether lost to us. Everything that is forgotten, is as if stored up in the mind. Our mind is a great and wonderful store, where each idea and impression, we received from our very birth, is kept arranged in its proper place. Everything that we thought, felt or acted does exist there.

53. We can and do actually revive any one of them when we require.

Thus, there are two factors, our mind consists of:—
(1) knowing, feeling, and acting in the living present, and
(2) the great storage of all forgotten ideas and impressions.

The psychologists call the first the **conscious** and the second the **sub-conscious..**

The Sub-conscious is Extremely Active.

54. People generally think that what is in the consciousness is living and active, and what is forgotten or has sunk down in the sub-conscious is lying dead and dormant. This is a great misconception. Every idea lying in the sub-conscious, on the other hand is always active and struggling to come and occupy the conscious, and they do come up at once as soon as they get an opportunity. Bergson says, **"that which we felt, sought, willed from infancy is here now, bending over the present moment, which goes merging into it and pressing against the gate of consciousness which would leave it without."** The Buddha has also said the same thing that our present personality is an out-come of all which we did, felt or thought from the very beginning.

55. The personality of a thief differs from that of a saint because they have acted and thought differently in the past. What is past is not past and gone, but extremely lively in the living present. Our past actions and thoughts follow us 'as closely and surely as the wheels follow the feet of the oxen, or the shadow follows its object.'

56. A man is therefore, verily how he has painted his own sub-conscious, where every touch of thought he ever made is present, expressing itself in its own way. **This is exactly what is the life of the self of a man.** We are what we have produced ourselves to be.

57. Apart from our mind which consists of the conscious and the sub-conscious, as we have already seen, there is no else transcendental factor like soul or Atma.

58. We are our own mind. A man is pure, when his sub-conscious is full of pure thoughts and impressions; and a man is impure when his sub-conscious consists of all evils and vices.

59. Some may object at this point and say:—**"If all our experiences, even the faintest ones, are recorded in the sub-conscious how is it that we fail to recollect most of them?"**

60. Well; it is due to the strength or the weakness of our conscious that we can or cannot recall any memory from the great store of the sub-conscious, where everything does exist. A man who practises meditation and has trained the conscious to be steady and more pointed, gets a much better recollective power than that of ordinary men, whose conscious is fickle and unsteady. The more steady and pointed the conscious will become, the more power it will exercise over the sub-conscious. The Buddha had trained the conscious so very perfectly that **He could even revive from his sub-conscious, things experienced in so many previous births!** It is no wonder! Everything does exist in the sub-conscious and can be recalled to us after due training.

61. The life of the sub conscious does not begin with our birth in this world, but is coming from the very beginning growing bigger and bigger. It contains everything that has once come into it.

C. ALL IS DUKKHA OR MISERY.

1. Dukkha is just a fact which follows essentially from the Truth of impermanence and emptiness. There is

no permanence or substance which can be held fast with any hope of security and satisfaction. We, due to our Tanha, try to catch the world and keep it close to us, but, it glides away so swiftly before we are aware of it: and thus we are left lamenting and grieving. There is no resting place in the universe where we can go and stand with any consolation. All is anicca and anatta, or impermanence and emptiness.

2. The Buddha has said: "Not in the air nor middle of the sea, Nor entering a mountain cave to hide, Nor anywhere on earth canst thou abide Where Death shall not pursue and conquer thee" (128 Dhammapada).

3. Misery is the first noble truth; which is already described fully while referring to the first sermon, Dhammacakka Pavattana Sutta—given by the Lord to the five mendicants at Isipatana, Benares.

4. It is interesting to note how the different types of Indian philosophy explain the Problem of Misery in their own way and what reality they give to it.

5. Vedanta philosophy is radically opposed to Buddhism. It holds the view of SatkCit—Anada, viz., Permanence-Spirit-Bliss; against the Buddhist Doctrine of Impermanence-Empty-Misery.

6. According to Vendanta a unity—stagnant and static—is real; and the world of diversities—in a flux—is **'Maya'** or illusion. A mystic spirit is real, and the empirical mind and matter illusion. Bliss is real and Misery illusion. This mystic singular and blissful spirit is called by the name of Brahma in Vedanta philosophy; and the philosopher strives to realise this nature of Brahma.

7. Sankya-Yoga philosophy does not condemn the

world and Misery as illusion, but maintains its metaphysical reality as a living truth. But, together with the material world, it at the same time believes in a plurality of mystic spirits, forming the central essence of man, which is by nature Pure. These are called the name of Purusa.

8. How these essentially **pure** Purusas are defiled by sin and misery is explained with a beautiful simile.

The reflection of a red flower falls on a pure crystal, and then it also takes the same hue. Thereby, the crystal does not become red actually but it only seems like that because of being associated with the flower. Just in the same way the impermanence of the material world is reflected on the purusas; and also they begin to realise by ignorance that the impermanence belongs to themselves. In reality the pure character of the Purusas is not defiled.

9. Thus, Sankhya makes Misery not illusory as Vedanta does, but gives it a mere shadowy reality. Sankhya philosophy however, fails to answer how ignorance comes into its **pure** nature by which he mistakes the reflection to be reality. It means that the nature of the Purusa is already defiled before any such reflection falls on it. Thus, the pure nature of Purusa itself is unproved. Many more objections can be raised against Sankhya, which cannot be replied satisfactorily from its standpoint.

10. Nyaya philosophy regards Misery as an attribute of Atma: and Jaina philosophy as a veil or 'avarna' over the pure Jivas.

11. All these different philosophies fails to realise Misery as a Reality, because they cannot free themselves from the ignorance of a permanent soul.

12. We have already seen that it is only in the true

Light of Anicca, that the ignorance of Soul disappears, and one sees Misery as it is.

And, when a man realises Misery as it is he seeks an Emancipation from it.

2. WHAT IS EMANCIPATION? (NIBBANA).

1. Though committing repetition of some points, which are already described above in full, let us be patient to understand the present issue afresh in full details.

2. The world is governed by law of "Paticca Samuppada" or Dependent Origination. Nothing can originate without depending on something else, previous to it, and there can be no originated thing which does not give rise to something else in its turn.

Illustration.

3. The operator moves the dynamo. The movement causes friction. The friction produces electricity. The electricty moves the fan.

4. If the operator does not turn up, the dynamo is not moved. If the dynamo is not moved, it does not cause any friction. If there is no friction at all, electricity cannot be produced. If there is no electrict current, the fan cannot move.

5. In the above chain of cause and effect, one incident arises, depending on one, previous to it: and gives rise to one after it. And the absence of one in the chain puts a stop to all, following that. This is how, nature is governed by the law of Paticca Samuppada.

6. Lord Buddha applied this very law of "Paticca Samuppada" in explaining Dukkha i.e. birth, decay and misery.

Tanha Is Followed By Upadana.

7. Tanha is desire or attachment, and Upadana is clinging (for the attainment of the desired one).

We see a beautiful object and then get a desire for that—I should have it, it should be mine. This desire causes us to strive and struggle for its attainment. It is clinging.

Upadana Is Followed By Bhava.

8. Bhava literally means existence—here, it means the existence of the process of our life. So, it is clinging on which the existence of our life-process depends.

9. What is our life but a chain of constant clingings for the attainment of that which we seek after, and for the avoidance of that which we hate! Eating, drinking, walking, and the smallest action we perform are meant to make ourselves more convenient. We cannot even conceive of a life, devoid of all clingings.

Thus, the existence of our life-process depends on Clinging.

Bhava IS Followed By Jati, Jara Marana Etc.

10. When the life-process is existent, it is born, becomes old, dies, meets success and failures; gets hope and disappointment, and so all ill follows.

11. **If we conquer our Tanha, there will be no Upadana;** for, how can any clinging be possible, when there is no

desire! An "Arahat" sees a beautiful object, but does not get desire or attachment for it, and so no clinging arises in him.

12. An absence of clinging means a stop page of the life-process.

When the life-process is stopped, there is no birth, decay, and all ill i.e. Dukkha.

Thus Dukkha is stopped. All ill is removed.

13. This very total extinction of all desire (tassayeva tanhaya asesa viraga-nirodho), is called Nibbana.

The Life Of An Arahat.

An Arahat has killed all desire, and so he does not get any clinging. One may object at this point:—If an Arahat has got no clinging, how does his life-process continue to exist, for, it is clinging on which the existence of the life-process depends, as we have already seen?

15. This question can be well understood, by comparing the life of an Arahat, to the movement of the fan, when it is already switched off. The fan continues to move for some time even when the current is stopped, due to its previous force. When all the impetus is exhausted, it stops dead.

An Arahat has stopped all desire, and gets no clinging, but his life-process continues due to the impression of his previous Kamma-desire and clinging. He attains Parinibbana, after the fall of his body, and when all previous Karmic force is also exhausted up.

The fire is extinguished and cooled down (sitibhuto pari-Nibbuto).

An Absurd Question.

16. Some people ask "But, what does become of a man after his Pari-Nibbana?" This is an absurd question. The life process of a man was continuing, as long as it was being urged by Tanha. With the stoppage of Tanha, the life-process is stopped. The cause being absent the effect does not arise.

Self-Annihilation.

17. Does then Nibbana, some question, mean self-annihilation?

18. Well, according to Buddhism the very word "annihilation" (Uccheda) is an impossibility. Nothing can be annihilated. We cannot annihilate even one drop of water, or the smallest particle of dust. What is existent cannot be made non-existent. How can then the self be annihilated?

19. The real flaw of the above doubt consists in the preconception of an identical self. Buddhism does not maintain the existence of any such identical self.

20. The movement of the fan is stopped, when the current is cut off. It does not mean that the movement is annihilated. Neither was there any, **identical movement,** nor was it annihilated. It must be understood only in the light of our often repeated phrase—the cause being absent, the effect does not arise.

Nibbana is similarly, the stoppage of birth, decay etc., by stopping Tanha.

Is Nibbana An Eternal State?

21. The opponent still persists to ask—if Nibbana is not annihilation, is it an eternal state?

22. This question is again faulty, for, it goes to the other extreme or "eternalism" (Sassata vada). According to Buddha there is no eternal existence (niccam). Everything that exists, Lord Buddha said, is aniccam and dukkham i.e. non-eternal and misery, conception of eternality and bliss is a misleading superstition.

23. When it is said that Nibbana can be attained in this life itself, it does not mean that any sort of blissful state is achieved at, for, then it would become a mundane acquirement, like any other. It means only this—that a man can realise the total cessation of Tanha in this life, as an Arahat does.

24. Really, the question, "Whether it is a state?" does not come in. A state is always of something which exists identically. According to Buddhism, there is no such identical factor, in man, which can be said to exist in any state, after Nibbana.

25. No state of any existing thing can be possible, where there is neither birth, nor decay, nor death. The watch-word of Buddhism is "yat sat tat ksanikam" or what ever exists is transitory.

26. Thus Nibbana is neither annihilation (uccheda) nor an eternal state (sassata), for, both of the alternatives are impossible in themselves.

Nibbana then, is the stoppage of birth, decay, etc, by stopping Tanha—the absence of effect due to the absence of cause.

IS NIBBANA THE SUPREME BLISS?

27. The Lord has himself said—"NIBBANAM PARAMAM SUKHAM" or Nibbana is the Supreme Bliss.

But this should not be understood literally to declare some state of positive existence. **Supreme bliss is possible only in an unchanging permanent and abiding soul, which Buddhism rejects absolutely.** For Buddhism, there is no such soul; there is only the process of life, changing and proceeding and therefore miserable.

28. Nibbana is said to be the Supreme by the Buddha **only in an exaltative** praise of it.

29. When the Buddha said:—"PANNA NARANAM RATANAM" or wisdom is the gem of mankind, he did not mean thereby that wisdom is actually a precious stone or crystal. It was only an exaltative praise of wisdom. It simply means that wisdom is the most valuable of all acquirements. Nothing more.

30. Similarly, "Nibbana is Supreme Bliss" means that is it the highest ideal, one can realise; for, it consists in a stoppage of all ill by stopping Tanha, the cause of all ill.

3. The Ten Fetters.

1. The virtuous and energetic man who is eager to end Misery, has to overcome ten mental-fetters, the last of which is avijja, the driving principle in the flow of life. These fetters are the false attitudes towards reality imbibed and strengthened in the sub-conscious from time immemorial, for countless lives.

2. These fetters can be overcome by leading a highly virtuous life and after due training of the mind on the line Dhyana and Samadhi.

3. When the saint has destroyed the three fetters—namely:—

(1) (1) Sakkayaddithi (already explained above (2) Vicikiccha (=doubts in the Dhamma), and paramasa Silabbata (=external ceremonies and performances, thinking that they lead to purity)—he becomes SOTAPANNA (=one who has entered the stream that leads to Nibbana). At the most he is to be born only seven times to destroy his avijja (=ignorance) totally and end Misery.

(II) When the saint has weakened very much the two more fetters—namely (4) Kamaraga (=sense-desire), and (5) Patigha (=ill-will)—he becomes SAKADAGAMI (=He is re-born only once if he does not attain Arhantship).

(III) When the saint finally overthrows the above two fetters, he becomes ANAGAMI (=Never returner).

(IV) When the saint destroys the remaining five fetters—namely (6) Rupa raga (=desire to live in the material world), (7) aruparaga (=desire to live in the termless world), (8) Mana (=conceit), (9) Uddhacca (= any unequilibrium of the mind) and (10) Avijja (=ignorance)—he becomes an ARAHAN.

Buddhaghosa says in his Visudhhimagga:

"Just as, however, a man displeased with flowers, fruits, etc. of a tree, will pierce it on each of its four sides with the poisonous thorn called the Mandu-thorn, and then that tree, when its earth-extracted juices and its Shape have become exhausted by the application of that poison, will arrive at a state of inability to bear fruit and not be able to reproduce itself: in exactly the same way a youth of good family, displeased with the existence of the Khandas, will, like the man who applied poison to the tree on each of its four sides, begin to apply the meditation of the Four Paths to the series of his Khandas. "And then the series of his

Khandas, when the re-birth-causing corruptions have become exhausted by the application of the poison of the Four Paths, revolves itself into such bodily and other kinds of Karma as constitute barren action; and arriving at a state of not being liable to be reborn in the future, and unable to reproduce itself in the next existence, by the cessation of the last consciousness becomes like a fire without fuel, and passes into Nibbana without attachment." Warren 380.

The Lord has said:—

> "Khinam puranam, navam natthi sambhavam,
> Virattacitta ayatike bhavasmim, Te Khinabija
> aviruthichanda Nibbanti dhira yathayam padipo,
> Idampi samghe ratanam panitam, Etena saccena
> suvatthi hotu."

The old is destroyed, the new has not arisen, those whose minds are disgusted with a future existence, the wise who have destroyed their seeds (=Tanha—the cause of existence) and whose desires do not increase, go out like the lamp is extinguished.

This excellent jewel is in the Sangha. BLESSINGS BE UPON YOU BY THE MERIT OF THE TRUTH.

COVER DESIGN

Birth and death are only two phases of the same process. Birth may take place in different realms of existence. There are altogether Thirty-one planes in which being manifest themselves according to their moral or immoral karma (actions).

The eleven horizontal lines with the enclosed sphere represent part of these Thirty-one planes of existence, viz heavens, asuras, human beings, animals, hungry ghosts and hells. The broadest line signifies the realm of hells which has the highest intensity of suffering.

Emerging from this sentient sphere of samsara (recurrent wandering) is the beginning of enlightenment whereby the differing bands of yellow represent the remaining twenty planes of existence before Buddhahood is attained.

And we should be in this stage, in our journey of life, leaving behind ignorance and craving and setting forth in the quest for Nirvana (final emancipation) on the wide horizon.

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"For the glory of the Pure Buddhaland, this book is presented to express our fourfold deep gratitude to those above and to help those of the three realms below to deliver themselves from suffering. May those also hear or see this, strive to the end of their mortal life to save themselves and others and he born in the Paradies of the Supreme Happiness."

= = THE END = =

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